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**COMPOSERS IN THE FIRST PERSON
*THE SECOND CHINCH FESTIVAL IN BELGRADE***

When the *Chinch* festival was announced in the fall of 2004 Belgrade (September 16-19), and the regular Tribune of Composers failed to be held that spring (if only due to financial reasons), the new project entitled *Composers in the first person* triggered a great deal of interest, especially with young people, as it was held in the Student Cultural Center (SKC). The initiators were young musicologists (B. Cvejić, J. Novak, K. Stevanović) and composer Jasna Veličković, who on the first afternoon of this manifestation and prior to the superb piano recital by Nada Kolundžija, held a lecture on her own oeuvre. Before all others, *the composer in the first person* was Louis Andriessen (b. 1939), a prominent guest from Holland, original and always avant-garde, who on the following day, before playing some of his pieces, held a lecture on his creative work, his opus. Every day we attended a lecture with a presenting of the oeuvre of other guests as well - Gilius van Bergeijk from Holland, Bernhard Lang from Austria, and others.

Two years after that, on December 1-3, 2006 the *Second Chinch* festival was held (the organizers were J. Veličković and I. Neimarević; Jugoconcert was the executive producer) in a different venue, on the Pogon Doma Omladine scene, a setting which, in the future, should be reconsidered, taking into account the inadequate acoustic conditions and a different audience in attendance. There was a greatly reduced number of listeners, while the three concert evenings (with workshops as introductory lectures), by their conception, as well as their presentation and realization of the work, were on a very high artistic level. This time, presenting themselves were young composers/performers gathered into two ensembles from Holland: the *Ear Massage* (a percussionist quartet) and the *Electronic Hammer* (a trio: a percussionist and two electronic performers), who with their creative imagination surpassed the announced pieces and their not so modest performing possibilities. Along with them, we should also mention the British *composer in the first person* Richard Ayres, who has been present on the contemporary music scene for a while and yet is in a permanent quest for a new/personal expression and, along with the 'subdued' youthful *Composition number 8* for piano, we also heard what he is at the moment occupied by – as always, something quite individualistic.

The Electronic Hammer ensemble (Diego Espinosa, percussionist, Henry Vega and Juan Parra, electronic performers), along with two magnificent performances of the two live electronic performers, also presented two innovative works thanks to an extraordinary approach of realizing a 'score': *Me(n)tal* by Rodrigo Sigal, with a magical sound created by hitting a metal chair and *Clip* by Alejandro Castanos, with a completely new, free form (perceived only by listening, without the need for a mental 'score')

with a strong internal structuring of the material! The artists performed an encore as extraordinary improvisers.

The second concert, right at the beginning by the ‘ad hoc’ ensemble *Chinch Bug Extended*, affirmed the reputation of Piano duo LP (an excellent Sonja Lončar and Andrija Pavlović, recipients of awards at the International Duo Competitions in Rome, to name one) with the *Duo per Duo* composition dedicated to them by two local authors (M. Savić - M. Drašković) and sought to show up the other pieces as performances – which was unnecessary: *A piece with running* by Richard Ayers, a grotesque mini-scenic fragment as a reminder of the comedians from the silent movies period or *Harde ballen* by Chiel Meijering, with a nostalgic sound, which in actual fact presents the repeated experience of the “bygones”, classically structured and in a very congenial fashion but nevertheless “painfully”, and whose author could not (or had no wish to) settle into the aggressive sound of the new/his times.

The third concert of this mini-festival, by the ensemble *Ear Massage*, presented, along with pieces by Christopher Rouse, Peter Adriaansz, and Jasna Veličković (*Sputnik 5*, of an unclear conception), two authors who perform brilliantly, and not just during that evening, Dimitry Kourliandsky (b. 1976), and David Lang (b. 1957), a member of the New York-based founding group of the *Bang On A Can* festival). Interpreted by this superb percussionist quartet, an eight-minute composition of the *Resonant Mass* by Kourliandsky sounded heavy-duty and exciting from beginning to end, when its sound gradually slowed down and detached itself, disappearing into the unknown, far from us, into space... and leaving in its wake a lingering silence! After the first impression on this work, the second composition, a part of the larger whole *The So-called Laws of Nature (III)* – by David Lang, convinced us that behind it is a significant creator, as every repeat listening uncovered new dimensions, new sound sensations, and, each time, new possibilities of interpretation. Moreover, as the composition, rather impressively, ended with a gong being hit (the Big Bang?), there was an unprompted associating with Lang’s New York group!

The *Second Chinch Festival* was a real stimulant and a strong supplement to the *Tribune* (held before the festival) as the project *Composers in the first person* offers ample possibilities and a genuine adventure, and thus it might be a good idea to invite, for example, the brilliant contrabass player and composer Stefano Scodanibbio with his ensemble, or Fabio Cifariello-Ciardi with the Edison studio group from Italy, considering that the *Chinch* “invites authors to discuss their position in the world order of contemporary music and seek answers on how the expectations of today’s music function in different cultural contexts”.

Translated by Elizabeta Holt